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SUBJECT: INSTRUCTIONS ON DECEMBER 3 CONSULTATIONS ON
BONUCA

11. ACTION REQUEST: USUN is instructed to draw from talking points in para 2 below during December 2 consultations on the UN Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BONUCA). End action request.

12. Begin points:

The United States strongly supports Special Envoy Francois Lonseny Fall,s efforts to build peace and security in the Central African Republic (CAR), and thanks the Secretary General for his report to the Council on UN activities during the last six months. Today, I would like to make three points.

First, the Secretary General,s report notes a recent UN inter-agency assessment indicating the need to develop UN joint planning and integrated operations in CAR, under the leadership of SRSG Fall. We also note the observations of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) mission to CAR last month.

We believe that peacebuilding should be an element of all UN activities in CAR and that an integrated approach with BONUCA in the lead is essential for UN success. Under the leadership of SRSG Fall, BONUCA and the country team should strengthen joint planning and move toward integrated operations.

We commend Ambassador Grauls for leading the PBC mission to Central African Republic and for his commitment to strengthening political stability in CAR. In our view, as the political process in CAR advances and the Inclusive Political Dialogue gets underway, the PBC will play two important roles. It will shine a spotlight on CAR, bringing it to the attention of additional donors, and will reinforce the international community,s message that momentum must continue on restoring the rule of law, including the protection of human rights and the transparent management of natural resources.

Second, we see the next few months as a critical period for the Central African Republic. The Inclusive Political Dialogue begins this week (December 5 -22) in Bangui, with financial support from the Peacebuilding Fund and thanks to the efforts of BONUCA, the African Union, the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue, and the Gabonese government. We hope for full participation by all stakeholders, including all rebel groups, opposition parties, and civil society. We expect that the Inclusive Political Dialogue will realize the June 2008 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and that all parties, including the government, will take the needed steps in order to effect peace.

As the Inclusive Political Dialogue progresses, we note that it is also important to have dialogue in the field with rebel units who often are not in contact with their leaders and with those groups that have splintered off. Of course political dialogue is by itself not enough. Talks must be accompanied by assistance for communities who desperately

need basic social services and programs to restore economic opportunity.

We share the Secretary-General's concerns about impunity and repeated violations of human rights in the Central African Republic. All parties must understand that continued progress in ending impunity and protecting human rights is a necessary precondition to expanded international assistance and to the ultimate success of the government in restoring basic social services across all regions of the Central African Republic. In particular, the Central African government must take action to increase security in northwestern and north-central CAR, particularly in those areas in which bandits, also known as zaraguinas or coupleurs de route, and the self-defense militias freely operate.

We were pleased by the outcome of the November 18-19 preparatory meetings in Libreville. We hope that UNDP will facilitate an understanding between the government and the rebels on a DDR process with agreement on key details such as areas for cantonment, arrangements for integration into the community, and options for integration into the security forces. Any SSR/DDR efforts must include economic and social development initiatives. We are concerned that absent a long-term development approach, ex-combatants and military officials will lapse back into activities that these programs are meant to address. We also believe impunity and

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compensation for victims must be addressed.

Third, we continue to believe that MINURCAT and a follow-on force to replace EUFOR should be present in northeastern CAR to prevent further regional conflict. We encourage BONUCA to continue to support MINURCAT as it implements its mandate in northeastern CAR and look forward to learning how BONUCA and MINURCAT will collaborate. BONUCA should continue to regularly liaise with MINURCAT on building law enforcement capacity in northeastern CAR. We urge DPKO and DPA to work cooperatively to ensure there is an adequately trained and equipped police presence, supported by the requisite judicial infrastructure, to provide police protection to the citizens of CAR. We recognize MINURCAT, BONUCA, and UNHCR efforts to train security forces thus far and encourage continued cooperation with MICOPAX, the Central African Economic Community's peacekeeping force.

The U.S. is pleased the UN has increased its support to the Government of CAR, particularly in the areas of rule of law, security sector reform, and the revitalization of conflict-affected communities. Despite these efforts, vast regions of ungoverned or undergoverned territory exist in CAR, presenting a potential security vacuum; and the lack of an adequately functioning government places civilians in jeopardy. We believe it critical that other steps be taken in CAR to ensure adequate governance and to avoid a humanitarian crisis. We urge DPA to further incorporate in its assistance efforts programs to establish good governance principles and to build capacity to deliver essential services to the citizens throughout CAR.

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